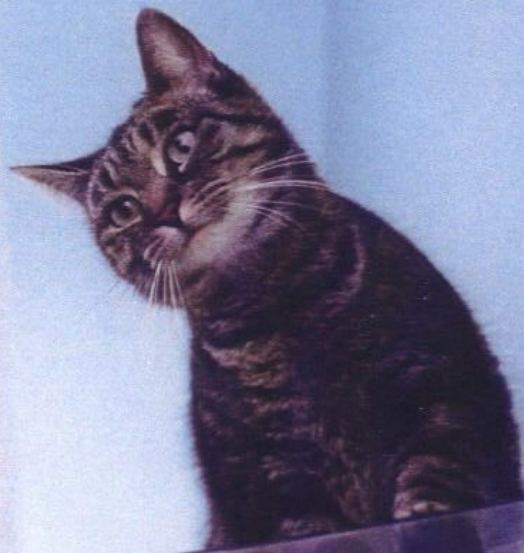


# *in six dimensions*

*an anthology of great poetry*

*London T.O.P.S. Poets*



*edited by B. O'Donnell*

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IN SIX DIMENSIONS

AN ANTHOLOGY OF  
GREAT POETRY

BY

LONDON AREA POETS:

Kathleen Kemp Haynes

Sonya Carswell

Leona Nylor

Carl A. Lapp

Albert Harper

B. O'Donnell

**edited Wayne Ray**

**The Ontario Poetry Society &  
Canadian Poetry Association  
London Chapter  
&  
Electronic Books In Print**

**DEDICATION**

Our grateful thanks to The London Arts Council  
and to Wayne Ray

for their generous support

## **PASSENGERS IN LIFE**

Life is like a journey  
Taken on a train  
With reflections of the passengers  
On each window pane.  
I may sit beside you  
All the journey through  
or I may sit alone  
Never knowing you.  
But should fate intervene  
And I sit by your side  
Lets be friendly travellers  
For life's so short a ride.  
Sonya Carswell

## **Another Autumn**

As grandfather's maple  
sags in the north wind,  
moonlight winks through the branches,

and the autumn leaves  
blink silver and black  
like the wing tips of a plane  
vanishing into night.

Grandfather touches my arm.

Carl A. Lapp

## **Snow, Early October**

Splats of wet snow, just inchoate clumps:  
Queen Anne's Lace of winter descended  
Before Fall's nostalgia ever burned,  
Alarming the trees, some not yet turned.

Wads impaled on trees' leafless stems:  
Wind whisks scrubbing clouds, October sky.  
Whose flakes wink out against tree bark,  
Enriching its moss-skin, velvet, dark.

Brisk crystals shunned by warm-shouldered Earth  
Still so enthralled with brilliant-leafed shawl  
So, to the road, hopeful they wandered  
Snuffed out, their population squandered.

Manna lasting less than a minute.  
Crystal plummets, no leaf's grace in it.  
Melts to quaking vacuole puddles  
Reflecting roaring Autumn colours.

In the end, thawed, they lacquer the leaves  
And proffer a tear on waxen lip.  
Catalyst for Indian Summer,  
Fall dreams raked up, tied to dry in sheaves.

B. O'Donnell

**death of a lady - to MIR**

streaking fiery fragments to earth,  
functioning under remote control.  
three "burns" to bring her down,  
not temperamental in final hours.

home to earth after fifteen years,  
to the bosom of the deep,  
softly cradled in the arms  
of Neptune. obedient to the last.

her wings weren't burned by the sun.  
she didn't fall because of hubris.  
a derelict, not quite, nor spurned lover,  
but rather she outlasted her usefulness.

asleep forever in the deep.

Kathleen Kemp Haynes



## **GOODBYE MY FRIEND**

I lost my best friend today.  
He wasn't hit by a car or wandered away.  
He got very sick and the vet said he must die.  
I could only hold him and kiss him good-bye.  
What can you do when breathing means pain.  
When all of his efforts to move are in vain,  
And just from the sad troubled look in his eye  
You knew that it even hurt him to try.  
It's a selfish thing to want him to live.  
All of his love he would willingly give,  
But deep down inside truly I know  
This is our last day together for he has to go.  
Sonya Carswell

## Needlepoint

Arched over her petit point  
On a rounded cushion  
Lips softly pursed  
Like a rosebud  
Tightly furled,

I had to bend over  
To make out  
The contours  
Of her face  
Intent upon  
The focus  
Of her work,

Drawing each sharp	At arm's length
Needle stitch	A constant paying out
Delicately caught	Of talent, work and
Tight into the air.	The commodity of time.

Albert Harper

## **LOVE IS AGELESS**

Long ago I fell in love  
This boy and this girl of youth  
A love so happy and free  
But then I moved far away  
But our love still grew  
For man now grown and me  
Our paths have changed and so have we  
But in our hearts our love is still  
For now with age upon our brow  
Love of youth still in our hearts doth prowl  
Leona Nylor

## **A CHILD'S WORLD**

As a child you think  
A grownup is what you want to be  
But often times  
It's a grownup who will steal  
The dreams of a child.  
Too young to understand  
Yet too old to tell  
Of losses of life  
Not yet travelled  
The dreams that were  
Can never be  
For no longer a child are we  
But all grownup inside  
Where no one can see.

Leona Nylor

**To Ayrton,  
May Your Dreams Be Fair**

Eyes closed, what visions dance beneath  
The lids drooped silently and sweetly still.  
The visions are of toys, of dogs, of cats,  
Of sweetmeats, fairies, dragons, knights and days  
Of sun, and rarely seen man in the moon,  
Of flying, jumping, and of long, long walks,  
With trees and birds and cloud banks over hills  
Of places only little boys can dream.

Now eyelids closed upon a teenage boy  
The lids droop languidly and silent, sweet.  
The visions are of racecars, horses, hoops,  
Of picnics on the beaches in the sun,  
Of playing jokes on little naive girls,  
Of flying in a plane to vistas new,  
With lumberjacks and astronauts and fish,  
Of places, things a teenage boy can dream.

The eyelids of a man flutter in dreams.  
Gone is the absolutely relaxed state.  
The visions are of women, children, job,  
Of hills too high, of water cold and wet,  
Of contracts lost, of failure and of fights,  
Of pride betrayed, of broken dreams and sight  
With mounting bills, with mortgage costs, interest,  
Of situations only man can dream.

The eyelids of the elderly are closed.  
The dreams he dreams are of the childhood lost,  
Of dogs and cats and children long since gone,  
Of sun-filled days on beaches of his youth,  
Of flying, jumping and of long, long walks,  
Of trees and birds and clouds low-hung on hills,  
The sights of people he has known are his  
Delighted visions of the elderly.  
Kathleen Kemp Haynes

## **Your Oration**

At first; you read with balance and phrasing  
Stressing text's clarity, each word uttered.  
Then (hypnotised by page's gilt edge?)  
Your voice took on their tremulous flutter

Beginning to soar away on its own  
Transfixed with sounds of its own oration,  
Transcending us, doggedly scratching  
With pen 'neath your self-standing ovation.

You paced Colosseum's proscenium,  
Certain each litteratus was struck dumb.  
Buoyed by its hot air your speech ascended.  
For all you knew its flight never ended.

Your voice became expansive, resplendent  
Arcing far above podium venue.  
Looking down on Earth's curve, exceeding our ken,  
We shaded our eyes to keep it in view.

Your shining face showed you had jettisoned  
With Virgil and Cicero and Horus,  
Leaving us below, mute, gape-mouthed chorus  
Scratching our heads over our thesaurus.  
B. O'Donnell

## **the news**

sleepy, in my cocoon,  
I see wildfires, bomb victims,  
pictures on my glowing screen  
bringing horror close to my home.

but I can have a cup  
of coffee and a piece of toast  
and contemplate what I will do  
with my quiet day.

morning has begun  
and forty-eight children  
have died of starvation, and  
AIDS has claimed many South Africans.

my cocoon perhaps has  
a tear in it as they rerun  
the twin towers burning,  
collapsing, showering victims.

I pick up the newspaper  
and another child has disappeared.  
I close my eyes and dream  
of peace and safetyà

perhaps that's only  
where they exist.  
Kathleen Kemp Haynes

## **Another Country**

In dawn's light the bus  
drones west across farmland.

The driver's loudspeaker crackles,  
"Good morning. Be sure to snap  
the grain silos against the prairie sky".

While in another country  
children cover their faces and cringe  
as stealth bombers skim the earth.

Carl A. Lapp

## **OUR SOUTHERN CHURCH**

Heat shoves us back  
down the church lane.

Like howitzers flames flash  
from the windows, climb black smoke,  
and rip through the roof.  
The steeple explodes.  
Like a failed space launch,  
the sky hisses.

I swear.

Carl A Lapp



## The Storm

One snowflake	Until its whiteness
Hardly matters	Without fail is lost
Without another	Spread-eagle wet
And another	Upon the pavement
In their parting	Vaporized in space
And their	And my forgetfulness.
Togetherness.	

Why is this one flake  
In pride of place  
Just where it is  
Coming from the void;

Why is this  
Small segment  
Of the storm  
At this one moment  
Between all moments  
Vanishing from sight,

Albert Harper

## **I HAVE YOU**

In this world of strife and sorrow  
I have found a shining star  
There's a rainbow in my sky  
Even on the darkest days  
Each day I am blessed  
For I have you  
When I first awake in the early dawn  
Till I close my eyes at night  
I have all I need  
And more than I could ask for  
I am truly blessed  
For I have you.

Leona Nylor

## **A TRIBUTE TO COURAGE**

(In Memory of June Dasiak,  
Co-worker, Team-mate and Friend)

She was a small thin bit of a thing ,  
Every inch full of drive and vitality.  
Outgoing, friendly, smart as a whip  
Facing life in all its true reality.

Five years she challenged the cancer  
That had become her deadly foe,  
Three times she was sent home to die  
But she refused to go.

Each morning she waited for the dawn  
When she could see the deer at play,  
The birds flocked to her feeders  
She'd been spared another day.

She clung to life tenaciously,  
Fighting with every breath.  
Forging on through constant pain  
Wrapped in the tentacles of death.

Some would say death won the fight,  
But I would disagree.  
She fought on when hope was gone  
And now she's finally free.

Sonya Carswell

## **Your Portrait     to V.**

After I heard your diagnosis that day  
I scrutinised your gallery of paintings:  
The throngs of faces, lantern-lit  
In alley and in conduit.  
Some had gazed at you for decades,  
Now turned their attentions away.  
All the true blues and reds and work-wracked browns  
Drained off canvas, pulsed through my veins.

Each sketched line, each brush stroke was re-enlivened,  
Pigments never to fade,  
Transformed by your courage in face of prognosis,  
Effacing all fears crouched in the shadows.

Still, there remains the question:  
Could you have conducted your life  
With safer, dimmer rules  
From lock-stepped, programmed schools?  
Your walls bravely hung with anything but mundane...  
I wish you'd made love to that stranger on the train.

B. O'Donnell

## **THE HITCHHIKER**

Jesus stood beside the road  
He carried our sins, a heavy load.  
I drove past without a care  
And left Him standing there.  
Suddenly I stopped the car,  
Without Jesus I couldn't go far.  
Immediately I turned around  
Hurrying back to the One I'd found.  
He was waiting patiently  
To be joined along the road by me.  
We'll travel together the rest of the way  
And by His side I'll always stay.  
I had journeyed far to find His Son,  
Jesus, God's most favoured one,  
Who offered me a chance to be  
Home with Him through eternity.

Sonya Carswell

## **The Cloud**

You went by  
Almost unnoticed  
Floating overhead  
Changing as you go,

As if to never find  
Some lasting shape  
With fleeting moments  
Left to live,

In readiness  
You seem to want  
To overtake the cloud ahead  
Merging in the heights  
With blueness of the sky.

Albert Harper

## **Lost**

The pain, the anger, the hurt  
It's all here  
Buried deep within my heart  
Sometimes at night  
When I'm asleep  
It creeps from its hidden depth  
To torture me  
I thought that I could bury it  
The pain, the anger, the hurt  
Deep, deep within this soul  
I am sad; I am lost  
Oh Lord, my soul cries  
For freedom long ago lost.

Leona Nylor

## NATURE

Looking through my pane of glass  
I sit with pen in hand  
For outside, wild is the night  
The wind roars like a lion  
Rain torments the passers-by  
Dare you defy my fury?  
Nature is my name  
I reign supreme in all my glory

I am free, I am beauty, I am woman  
In an instant, I can and I will change  
Snow drops as soft as feathers  
Sunshine warm as toast  
I am free; I am free  
Nature is my name.

Leona Nylor



## **Yourself**

I need no wall to stand  
Against the sifting desert sands,

I'll ask no shelter from  
The bitter wintry blast,

I will scarcely taste  
The sweetness of your gentle lips,

I hardly need to feel  
The firmness of your warm embrace,

Nor hear the words I cannot speak  
When I would trespass on and dwell  
Within your soul alone.

Albert Harper

## **At The Beach**

Beneath storm clouds, dunes darken  
and wheat grass swishes and bends down  
along corrugated sand

.  
Children drop their shovels  
and with arms outstretched  
grab fistfuls of wind in their joy.

Carl A. Lapp

## **The Visitor**

Indolent in the summer heat  
a seagull rides a wave  
that heaves, curls  
and catapults it  
above the beach.

The children point and shout  
as, like a stunt plane  
at an August fair,  
the seagull loops, skims low. rolls  
and climbs into the sky.

Carl A Lapp

## **JOYS OF THE OPEN ROAD**

I went for a ride the other day  
Out on the king's highway  
The joy; oh the joy  
As the miles flew by.

As I gazed out from my lofty perch  
I listened in awe  
As eighteen wheels carried me  
Down the king's highway.

A sunset of gold  
In a sky so blue  
As night fell, a sea of diamonds came into view  
Out here on the king's highway.

Fields of emerald green flew by  
Dandelions some of bright yellow; and yet  
Some just pods of fluff--for spring is everywhere  
Out here on the king's highway.

Leona Nylor

## **Haven**

bare feet dangling in crystal cold water,  
warm breeze wafting through my hair,  
sitting on a log across the creek,  
the song "Home sweet home" on my mind.

near me in the pasture, a herd of cows,  
black as midnight, their Angus coats.  
watching them ruminant is calming.  
before me a killdeer warning me gently away.

above, the clouds tell me no rain today,  
the grass grows long despite the cows.  
on each side of the creek standing sentinel  
two venerable gnarled willow trees.

I am at home on the farm of my youth,  
wishing forever to feel the peace.  
then I realise you can't go home again,  
that I'm back in the traffic feeling tense.

Kathleen Kemp Haynes

## **The Peacock's Feathers**

Brilliance of blue will not relent.  
Feathers nodding in soft assent:  
His murmuring Greek chorus grove  
In tow, these seraphim of Love

Identical, wave up and down,  
All eyes upon his haughty frown.  
Uraeus rules his brace of plumes  
Viewed large, in space of mirrored rooms

Like New York star walking the ramp.  
Of male vanity he's the champ.  
This rooster doesn't need to crow,  
More fronds fanned out than Vegas show.

Star power, though he can't sing or dance.  
Won't give autograph hounds a chance.  
Harem shares him. His mating drive  
Stronger than will to stay alive.

One quill sought after by Pharaohs,  
Coveted as Cupid's arrows.  
His looks a Dream. What makes him scream?  
His fern ends reach too far to preen!

B. O'Donnell

## **The Right Diagnosis**

She whined. She complained. She talked and she talked.  
He listened. He sighed. Would she ever be gone?  
The waiting-room bugled. The clock ticked and clicked.  
He squirmed and he squirmed. She went on, on and on.

He took a deep breath, and solemnly stated:  
"My dear, you've got severe Verbalitis."  
She stopped in mid-sentence,  
Diagnosticsally delighted.

Carl A. Lapp

## Pure Light

In pure Being  
There is no need  
Of guiding light,

In Being's  
Sacred chambers  
Secretly possessed  
No law nor purpose  
To fulfil it,

In Being's  
Hallowed place  
An empty calling  
No creation summoned  
To sustain it,

In Being's  
Inner shrine  
barely a sigh  
Or whisper  
No selfhood needed  
To maintain it.

Albert Harper



## Canadian kaleidoscope

a little jewel of crystal,  
sparkling, shining, dazzling,  
Isiah of the genetic kaleidoscope.  
turn the tube and the other pieces  
make interesting, tantalising patterns.  
the ruby English rose, Wilfred Kemp,  
the blue of the flag of St. Andrew  
can be seen in Robert Fleming,  
the red and white of St. Patrick  
is the piece, Annie Aykroyd.  
The Huguenot piece is Harry Winnett:  
France to Ireland to thirteen colonies,  
and then United Empire Loyalist.  
an interesting melange on his own.  
turning, they mix and form the designs.  
the pioneer, the 20th century immigrant,  
and the Dakota Sioux and Cree are  
the blends to form the perfection of  
little Isiah Bear, my great-grandson.  
without the jewel, the kaleidoscopic  
pattern would not be what it is.  
but it will grow on, ever mixing  
and matching, more interesting, more intricate  
and more powerfully beautiful.

Kathleen Kemp Haynes

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## LAKE HURON'S MANY FACES

Now is the time to enjoy the changing scene.  
Smooth blue waves rippling in the sun  
flowing toward the waiting shore as one.  
A time of peace, all is still and serene.  
The breeze becomes a wind blowing through the trees.  
The lake changes to various shades of green and black.  
The waves begin slashing the shore and rolling back  
frothing and fighting the turbulence with ease.  
Suddenly the peaceful lake becomes a churning sea  
of white caps leaping through the air.  
Five and six feet high they flare  
crashing on the shore angry and anxious to be free.  
With the setting sun the wind dies down.  
The lake quietly settles itself once more.  
No white caps are crashing on the shore.  
Now calm, the lake wears the moon as a crown.

Sonya Carswell

## **after supper**

I think one of the influences  
that helped my marriage  
was the image of my parents  
doing the dishes together.

they never did the dishes  
in a kitchen sink,  
but in a dishpan,  
which they filled from the kettle.

the images of Dad with arms  
and hands partly submerged  
in the soapy hot water  
and stacking snowy china.

Mom, dish towel in hand,  
attacking this stack and  
trying not to get behind,  
a study in motion time measurement.

their marriage succeeded  
as they tackled every job,  
including a fam, as a team,  
with no one's task more important.

a year after Dad died,  
out in the yard in the mud,  
Mom had a stroke which  
left her bedridden her last years.

even in the midst of a  
stroke-raddled consciousness,  
she remembered her Canada Bread man,  
her dishes partner, her Wilfred.

Kathleen Kemp Haynes

## **Wilfred Kemp**

he danced on the beams in the barn,  
like a ballet dancer struts on stage.  
he skated like a pro hockey player;  
fast and so energetically he whirled.  
he cursed with the best able seamen,  
even though his 20-year career was army.  
he played the accordion by ear  
and could draw you into those old songs.  
he loved his children and grandchildren  
almost as much as he loved his Ivy.  
a prince of a man born in Salford  
the bedroom for the cursed Manchester mills.  
Canadian he finally became in his sixties;  
but all his children were born in Canada.  
we still love you Dad and remember  
that you were a part of all our lives.

Kathleen Kemp Haynes

### **At The Pond**

The children squint  
as summer sun  
glints off the pond

Water-lilies in her hair  
a mermaid  
swims near and smiles.

Open-mouthed the children  
point. On a lily pad  
sleeps a frog.

Dave Lapp

Carl A. Lapp

## **IT IS A QUIET DAY FOR WONDERING**

It is a quiet day.  
And the subject of reincarnation occasionally comes to mind.  
I've wondered if I pursued this exactly what I'd find.  
I believe in the Great Creator, whether you call him Allah or God.  
You just have to look at nature to see the path He's trod.  
Have you ever had the feeling while visiting a new place,  
That you know what's around the corner or see a familiar face?  
Do you ever know what someone is about to say,  
When you didn't have a hint and were strangers until that day?  
The bible says when you pass away, providing you've earned the right,  
You will travel home to God and remain there in His sight  
That would mean millions of spirits would be at rest on high.  
Are they reaffirmed, and returned, to give earth another try?  
Does that mean when you pass on, and your soul is called above,  
You do not have the chance to help someone on earth you love  
I hope when it's my turn to leave God will lend a hand,  
And explain to me what is happening so I will understand.  
A word of reassurance is all I truly crave,  
That some day we will reunite some where beyond the grave.

Sonya Carswell

A Weather Report:

**SMOG ALERT**

**HUMIDITY**

Smog blanket	See the air
Thick and heavy	Hanging there
Lungs straining	Cut with a knife
Searching, searching	Save a life
Oxygen buried	Limp and wan
Beneath pollution	Energy gone
Breathing struggle	Thunder and rain
Wind carries away	Clean air again

Sonya Carswell

## **Fagin's Brood**

Endearing names like rag-a-muffin  
These doe-eyed; appealing "innocents"  
Cowered in mean cold and squalor,  
Circumstance forced to rob and to fence.

Mob -cap in hand, ragged overalls  
Gives all our hearts an Oliver Twist,  
Distraction while his comrade fleeces  
Your pocket watch, later to be missed.

That century, that penal system,  
Such theft would have been sufficient proof  
To place this poor wastrel urchin's neck  
In a predestined prison or noose.

Or, Artful Dodgers grew fast on streets  
Into the unscrupulous Bill Sikes  
Drowning in the swill, and the disease,  
Consorting with "ladies" of the night.

Soon, old, broken and unappealing,  
Wretched in a poor house or hovel.  
No longer artful, too slow to dodge,  
Subject of social comment novel.

B. O'Donnell



## **invasion**

the monsters attacked our quiet village  
at five minutes before five, May 23.  
they snorted, and blocked all access  
to our street by local citizens.

with chrome-gilded jaws and  
a variety of Churchill-like snarls,  
with backs laden with cargoes  
from new vans to ice-cream,  
and spices even the spice route  
couldn't have boasted carrying.

they growled as they clogged the streets,  
both directions, rumps to jaws,  
and we sat and could do nothing  
to preserve our pristine artery.

then just as suddenly as they  
had begun their trek a few feet  
from my porch, their exodus on  
May 24 proved to be the finale.

all 401 traffic had come through  
our neighbourhood because a  
multi-vehicle accident had closed  
the highway.

Kathleen Kemp Haynes

## **"Borrowed" Quotations**

I have distrust for quotations  
Their source lost. In isolation  
Selves helped from Franklin's dusty shelves  
To "God helps those who help themselves."

Each time quoted, its meaning's shaved.  
Its author rolling eyes in grave.  
Fanatics extricate a clause  
To help to expedite new cause

Into lingo of diatribe  
To keep their special cause alive  
Prefaced with "ev'rybody knows"  
Ultimate propagandists' hose.

Stack up for cabal or for claque  
To keep contributors on track,  
Divest the phrase of the context.  
Orphaned, they will supply the rest.

Its new meaning given the nod  
With chican'ry of dousing rod.  
For cross-exam, or gift book claim,  
Its meaning's never same again.

B. O'Donnell

## **Myself**

I die a little  
By the hour  
At each receding interval  
I lay a wreath,  
Moment by moment  
I yield my  
Quickening breath  
Like wavering lengths  
Of distant sound.

I fold onto myself  
My several body forms  
Like garments laid  
Rough, or silky thin  
Wasted or of use  
Waiting for the sun,

Like layered shells  
Or cast-off scales  
Ceaseless deaths  
Lie side by side  
Searched out  
Or largely  
Unaccounted for.

Not the fading  
Of redundant parts  
Or dead monotonies  
Of faults,  
But the urgent  
Redirected aim  
Proclaims the true  
Remembered self.

Albert Harper

Wayne Ray moved from Toronto to London in 1988 and is National Coordinator for the Canadian Poetry Association and runs their web sites and Resource Center. He is a founding member of the London Arts Council, past President of the London New Arts Festival and is President of HMS Press publishing (now Electronic Books in Print).